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张春河 著

信任类产品营销传播心理效果的 线索评价方法研究

A Research on How to Use Cues to Evaluate the Psychological
Effects of Marketing Communication of Credence Goods



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张春河 著

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中文摘要

对营销传播活动效果进行评价是整个营销传播活动的重要环节。常见的对营销传播活动效果的研究一般可分为传播效果研究、心理效果研究和行为效果研究(李金晖,2006)。从各种检索资料情况看,对营销传播的传播效果和行为效果的评价研究已经有很多,但对营销传播心理效果的评价研究,尤其是从认知心理学的角度对营销传播心理效果的评价研究却显得相对较少。为了更好地促进企业的营销传播活动,进行更深入的营销传播心理效果评价研究,就显得十分迫切和必要。

在国际营销学术界,通过线索有效性测量的方法评价营销传播的心理效果,最早可追溯到1972年Olson的研究。Olson于1972年提出了使用线索预测值(predictive value of a cue)和线索预测把握值(confidence value of a cue)两个指标评价线索的有效性,并指出在消费者高感知能力和高感知动机情况下,他们更倾向于使用高预测值和高预测把握值的线索信息判断评价产品质量。与线索理论有关的另一重要研究是Petty和Cacioppo于1982年在社会心理学研究中提出的精细思考

可能性理论(elaboration likelihood model)。在借鉴精细思考可能性理论的营销传播效果研究中(如 Liebermann 和 Flint - Goor, 1996; Areni, 2003),一般认为在消费者高信息处理能力和高信息处理动机时,他们更倾向于处理有关产品的观点信息(线索),而在消费者低认知能力和低认知动机情况下,他们更可能处理产品观点信息以外的信息(线索)。

上述对营销传播心理效果的线索评价研究虽然对人们更好认识营销传播的心理效果做出了重要的贡献,但依据最新的认知心理学有关知识表征的研究(如高文等,2000)和社会心理学有关信息处理动机的研究(如 Chen, Shechter 和 Chaiken, 1996),有关线索本质上是是什么、不同的消费者信息处理动机如何影响线索有效性评价从而影响营销传播效果等问题,并没有在营销传播心理效果研究中得到很好的回答。正是基于上述原因,本研究围绕信任类产品的营销传播心理效果的线索评价方法,展开了对相关问题的研究。

通过规范研究和实证研究相结合的方法,本研究得出如下 4 个主要研究结论:

第一,从消费者心理知识表征的角度解释产品形象,其本质上表现为各种产品的陈述性知识表征、程序性知识表征或图式知识表征。

第二,通过使用线索对产品形象进行评价,才能更好地评价营销传播的心理效果。

第三,消费者信息处理动机和信息处理能力的不同,决定着消费者的信息处理方式的不同,从而决定着营销传播心理效果的线索评价方法的不同。

第四,在消费者低感知能力和高感知动机情况下(即在信任类产品情况下),消费者既可能在理性状态下、有意识地,也可能在非理性状态下、潜意识地使用线索评价产品,因而,对营销传播心理效果也应该从意识、潜意识两个角度,使用线索评价营销传播的心理效果。

从所检索到的近 20 年以来国内外有关营销传播的研究资料看,本研究具有以下主要创新点:第一,从认知心理学的角度,第一次系统归纳阐述了产品形象,就是在消费者大脑记忆中有关产品的各种知识表征。这种知识表征既可能是陈述性知识表征,也可能是程序性知识表

征或图式知识表征。

从国内营销学术界的研究情况看,对产品形象的研究很多,但这些研究一般围绕消费者如何评价一种产品,即围绕消费者对产品的态度这一范畴研究产品形象,而没有出现“消费者大脑记忆储存中的产品形象到底是什么”这样一个涉及到产品形象本质问题的研究。

借鉴国际营销学术界对有关产品命题知识表征的研究(Hutchinson 和 Meyer, 1994; Nedungadi, 1990; Cowley 和 Mitchell, 2003; Chapman 和 Aylesworth, 1999),产品图式知识表征的研究(Neisser, 1987; Rosa 和 Porac, 2002),产品信息整合理论研究(Alba, et al, 1999; Karlsson, 2004)等研究,本研究认为,产品形象的本质反映的是有关产品知识的各种命题表征、映象表征、程序性知识表征或图式表征。本研究认为,这种从消费者大脑记忆储存的角度去认识定义产品形象,反映了认知心理学研究的最新成果,能更好地把国际营销学术界对有关产品知识表征的研究统一在一个研究框架内,便于更好地挖掘产品形象的深层含义,从而更好研究营销传播心理效果的问题。

第二,借鉴生物学对线索的定义,第一次明确界定了在消费者行为研究中,线索就是构成消费者某类产品知识表征的最具有代表性的类别特征。

虽然线索被认为是顾客对一种产品产生形象的基础(Dawar 和 Parker, 1994; Olson, 1972),但对线索理论的系统研究却非常有限。对线索的理解五花八门,线索被认为是一种刺激(stimulus);是帮助人们解决问题的证据(evidence)或建议(suggestion);是一种被用于提示某一行为中的一个事件的信号(signal);是一种信息等等。如果我们从认知心理学的角度去看这些对线索的理解,可以发现这些对线索的理解都没有回答“消费者大脑记忆储存中线索是什么”这样一个涉及到线索本质的问题。

本研究通过借鉴生物学中对线索含义及线索理论研究(Berretty, 1997; Maynard Smith 和 Harper, 2003),和认知心理学对知识表征的研究(如 Anderson 等, 1983),把线索定义为是反映产品形象(即产品知识表征)的典型类别特征。本研究认为,这种对线索的理解符合认知心理

学对记忆的编码、储存和提取方式的研究结论,因而能够使营销传播工作者更好地理解,为什么消费者只有通过使用线索,才能对产品做出判断,和为什么消费者只有通过线索,才能唤起记忆中的产品形象;也能够使企业更好地认识到营销传播活动只有为消费者创造或传递线索,才能更好地塑造产品形象,才是更有效的传播。

在有关产品形象线索的分类研究中,本研究还根据认知决策研究中的透镜理论(Wolf,2005)和传播学中的镜像理论(李彬,1993),提出了两个“镜像世界”的观点。本研究认为,在营销传播活动中,我们每个人实际生活在两种镜像世界中,一种是营销传播者向我们展示的产品镜像世界,另一种是我们自己形成的对产品的营销传播看法的镜像世界。前一种产品镜像世界是营销传播人员为我们塑造的,后一种产品镜像世界是我们在人生消费学习过程中为自己塑造的镜像世界。这样,在大多数情况下,消费者要想真正认识某种产品,不但要透过消费者为自己构建的镜像世界,还要透过营销传播人员为他们构建的镜像世界,才可能真正认识某种产品。反之,我们也可以说,在大多数情况下,营销传播人员要想真正认识顾客,不但要透过营销传播人员为他们自己构建的镜像世界,还要透过顾客为他们自己构建的镜像世界,才可能真正认识顾客。

本研究认为,两个镜像世界的观点更好地体现了市场元认知和社会市场智力的思想(焦璇和陈毅文,2004),有助于在更好地理解消费者信息处理能力、信息处理动机和信息处理方式内容之间关系的基础上,更好地开展产品的营销传播工作。

第三,在实证基础上,本研究第一次研究指出了,在消费者防御性信息处理动机情况下,可能存在两种对营销传播心理效果评价的方法,一种是在可供消费者选择的线索中,如果线索的预测值相对较高时,对营销传播心理效果的线索评价标准除了 Olson(1972)认为的线索“双高”情况外,还可能有“单高”情况和“一高一低”的情况;而在可供消费者选择的线索中,如果线索的预测值相对较低时,对营销传播心理效果的线索评价标准可能不是线索的预测值和线索预测把握值,而是与线索预测值和线索预测把握值无关的线索“熟悉度”。前者的营销传播心

理效果的线索评价标准反映的可能是消费者的一种理性的、有意识的信息处理情况,而后者反映的可能是消费者的一种直觉的、潜意识的信息处理情况。

第四,通过规范研究和实证研究相结合的方法,并根据产品信任特征营销传播、产品形象、产品形象线索之间的关系,第一次提出并论述了信任类产品的有效营销传播就是通过营销传播的手段传播或塑造有效线索,从而有效地塑造信任类产品形象的观点。鉴于任何企业的产品都有信任特征,本研究认为,这种对信任类产品有效营销传播的观点,有助于促进各类企业更好地开展营销传播的工作。

上述四方面的创新,是本研究的主要特点,也是本博士论文作者对所负责的国家自然科学基金项目(项目名称:产品形象形成与线索理论的研究。项目批准号:70372063)的主要研究成果。本书除了上述四个方面的创新外,还在信任类产品消费者的信息处理动机、使用线索信息的类型、线索有效性测量方法等方面有所创新,在此不一一赘述。

关键词: 线索 营销传播 传播效果 信息处理动机 评价方法

Abstract

It is usually believed that one of the most important aspects for marketers is to decide how to evaluate the effects of marketing communication. It seems common that the researches on evaluating the effects of marketing communication can be classified into the ones of the effectiveness of marketing communication, psychological effects of marketing communication and behavioral effects of marketing communication (Li, 2006). Based on the past researches, one can easily find that it is quite often for researchers to pay their attentions to the researches on the effectiveness and behavioral effects of marketing communication, but quite limited on psychological effects of marketing communication. For a better marketing communication by enterprise, it seems, therefore, quite necessary and important for researchers to have a deeper studying psychological effects of marketing communication.

In literature, it looks that the research on psychological effects of marketing communication can be traced back to Olson's research in

1972, who used predictive value of a cue(PV)and confidence value of a cue(CV) to evaluate the validity of a cue. In the light of Olson's research, when consumers have both high information processing ability and motivation, they are inclined to use the cue with high PV and high CV to perceive a product. It can probably be a close relative to Olson's cue theory that Petty and Cacioppo advanced Elaboration Likelihood Model(ELM)in social psychology in 1982. When applying ELM model to evaluating the effects of marketing communications(e.g. Liebermann and Flint- Goor, 1996; Areni, 2003), it is usually believed that when consumers have high information processing ability and motivation, they will tend to use arguments about a product to evaluate the product, but when consumers are in low information processing ability and motivation, they will be inclined to choose cues to judge the product. The past researches have devoted a lot for marketers to have a better understanding of the cue utilization in evaluating psychological effects of marketing communication, but it seems that researchers need to explore more.

Some issues, such as the meaning of a cue in nature from the angle of cognitive psychology and the way to evaluate the psychological effects of marketing communication through evaluating consumers' cue utilization, are raised again with the recent development on knowledge representation in cognitive psychology(e.g. Gao, et al, 2000) and on information processing motivation(e.g. Chen, Shechter and Chaiken, 1996) in social psychology. Based on the reasons mentioned above, this paper studies the way to evaluate the psychological effects of marketing communication in the light with consumers' cue utilization on credence goods.

On the basis of the normative research and empirical research used in this paper, four conclusions are drawn as follows:

Firstly, from the angle of consumers' product knowledge representation, product image created by marketing communication must be in fact existed in the forms of declarative representation, procedural representa-

tion or schema representation.

Secondly, it is probably a recommendable way to evaluate the psychological effects of marketing communication through using cue validity as a judgment to decide whether certain product image is positive or negative.

Thirdly, information processing ability and motivation as a prerequisite is determinant to influence the way of consumers' processing information, which is in turn influencing the way of cue evaluation used in judging the psychological effects of marketing communication.

Fourthly, when consumers are in a state of low information processing ability and information processing motivation (i. e. credence goods), consumers tend to use cues to evaluate a product either in a rational, conscious way or in an irrational, subconscious way. As a result of the fourth argument, the evaluation of consumers' cue utilization used in judging the psychological effects of marketing communication should also be considered as either in a rational, conscious way or in an irrational, subconscious way.

After a careful searching for the frontier researches on marketing communication in the past two decades, this paper has tried to innovatively explore some aspects of evaluating psychological effects of marketing communications as follows:

(1) From the marketing communication literature in the past decades, this paper seems to be the first one that systematically sums up the relevant researches on product image as well as deduces that product image means different product knowledge representation in consumers' mind. And further, this paper points out that product knowledge representation exists in the forms of declarative, procedural or schema representation.

One can easily noticed many researches on product image in Chinese marketing literature. These researches usually focus on how consumers

judge a product or what attitudes consumers usually hold toward a product, but few studies have dealt with what a product image really means in consumers' mind in nature. In accordance with the relevant researches on product image about product proposition representation (e. g. Hutchinson and Meyer, 1994; Nedungadi, 1990; Cowley and Mitchell, 2003; Chapman and Aylesworth, 1999), product schema representation (e. g. Neisser, 1987; Rosa and Porac, 2002), product information integration theory (e. g. Alba, et al, 1999; Karlsson, 2004) in marketing literature, this research believes that a definition of product image, which puts it basis on product knowledge representation, can promote researchers to firmly grasp the key meaning of product image, as well as provide researchers with a theoretical basis for better evaluating psychological effects of marketing communication.

(ii) By borrowing the cue definition in Biology, this research seems to be the first that define the cue in marketing communication as the typical attributes used by consumers to distinguish one type of product knowledge representation from another.

Although cues are believed as a basis for consumers to use to form product image (Dawar and Parker, 1994; Olson, 1972), fewer systematic researches have been contributed to studying cue meaning in marketing communication from the angle of knowledge representation. A Cue is usually explained as a stimulus, an evidence or suggestion for solving a problem, a signal to prompt another event in a performance, a kind of information, and so on. If one skips the above different explanations about a cue, he or she will at once notice that none of the above explanations has answered, "What is a cue in consumers' mind?"

By borrowing the definition given by Berrety (1997) in Biology, cue theory by Maynard Smith and Harper (2003), and the research on knowledge representation by Anderson (1983) in Cognitive Psychology, this research define a cue as the typical attributes used by consumers to distin-

guish one type of product knowledge representation from another. This research holds that this new definition about a cue is in line with the explanation on three stages of memory process, which usually believes that a memory process includes encode, reserve, and arouse. As a result of above explanations, this research believes the new definition about a cue will make marketers have a better understanding of the importance of cue utilization in consumers' judgment of a product, in arousing a remembered product in consumers' mind, and in creating product image by marketing communication.

According to Brunswik's Lens Model (Wolf, 2005) in Psychology and the Pseudo Environment by Walter Lippman in communication (Li Bin, 1993), this research holds that there are two Pseudo Environments in the world of marketing communication. One is created by product message senders of marketing communications, the other is built by product message receivers (consumers) of marketing communication. In most cases, if consumers want to know the real aspects of a product, they have to see through the Pseudo Environment built not only by themselves but also by message senders of marketing communications. On the contrary, if message senders of marketing communications want to discern the real aspects of consumers of a product, they have to see through the Pseudo Environment built not only by themselves but also by consumers. This research believes that the viewpoint of two Pseudo Environment also matches the theory of Marketplace Metacognition and Social Intelligence by Wright (2002). This research hopes that the viewpoint of the two Pseudo Environment will contribute to a deeper understanding of the relationships among consumers' information processing ability, motivation and ways, and also will promote a better marketing communication.

(iii) After implementing an empirical study, this research first proposes that under consumers' defense motivation, there may existed two ways to evaluate the psychological effects of marketing communication.

Firstly, When the predictive value of a cue(PV) is relatively high in optional cues, this research believes the cues used in evaluating the psychological effects of marketing communication involves not only the cues with both high predictive value of a cue(PV) and high confidence value of a cue(CV) suggested by Olson(1972), but also the cues with only high PV, only high CV, high PV but low CV, or low PV but high CV.

Secondly, When the predictive value of a cue(PV) is relatively low in optional cues, this research holds that the cues used in evaluating the psychological effects of marketing communication are decided probably not by PV and CV, but by "familiarity" criterion, that is, by familiarity a consumer with a product. It seems that the former criterion is concerned with consumers' rational, conscious information processing situation, but the latter criterion is linked to irrational, subconscious information processing situation.

(IV) By using both the normative research and empirical research in this paper, this research expounds the relationships among marketing communication of credence goods, product image, and product image cues. As a result of above discussions, this paper first proposes that valid marketing communication of credence goods is that it can create expected product image by creating valuable cues, which consumers tend to use to judge the product. Because any products have credence attributes at any enterprises, this paper strongly believes that the above arguments on valid marketing communications can contribute to implementing of a better marketing communication for any enterprises.

The above four innovative aspects are the main contributions of this research, and also are the research conclusions drawn from the research project "A Research on Building Product Image Based on Cue Theory", which is sponsored by National Natural Science Foundation of China, approval number: 70372063. In addition to the four contributions to the researches of marketing communication mentioned above, this research al-

so contributes some new to studying at defense motivation existed in the information processing of credence goods, the types of cues used by consumers of credence goods, and measuring techniques used in judging cue validity, and so on.

Keywords: Cue; marketing communication; effects of communication; information processing motivation; evaluation technique

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